

Sketch of the Abolitionists

Leicester, Massachusetts, July 15, 1845.

My dear Sir,

I cannot escape the feeling that you will think me very inattentive to your communication of March 2^d; only, I pray, do not set it down to intentional neglect, or to 'malice prepense'. Let me first thank you for your letter, which gave me much pleasure - for your views respecting Miss Martineau's case, &c., and then I will attempt something towards a reply to your queries. I w^d only remark that your letter, though dated March 2^d, did not come out till the 4th April Steamship, and was received by me about the 20th of that month.

As one member of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, and one citizen of a country which is holding nearly 3 millions of its population in an abject & awful bondage, I must heartily thank you for the interest you have already shown, and for your kind purposes for the future, in respect to efforts here to abolish Slavery, rescue so many of our brethren from their degradation & wrongs, & emancipate ourselves from the guilt of sustaining a system which destroys men & defies God. What you do, I am sure, will be most gratefully acknowledged here by all true Abolitionists. I only hope, as to your purpose of drawing up a statement touching the Cause & its advocates here, that my reply will not be too late to be of any service. I must just say, in vindication of myself, that I have never had so busy a spring & summer as this has proved hitherto; and I write now in great uncertainty whether I shall be able to commit

to paper even the imperfect answer which it is in my power to give you, in season for tomorrow's Steamship.

I. Your first question, "What is the number of active Abolitionists supposed to be in the United States?", I doubt if anybody has the means of answering. At the last Presidential election the so-called "Liberty-Party" polled about 63,000 votes, the whole number being ~~about~~ ^{from} 1 1/2 to 2 Millions. It is well known that very many, who professed to be Abolitionists, voted for Mr. Clay, expecting by his election to defeat the Annexation of Texas. A very considerable number do not vote at all, and have not for years, on the ground that the National Constitution is "a Pro-Slavery Compact", (so designed to be in the outset, and having proved such in its practical operation) and that any ^{political} action under it ~~was~~ ^{is} a participation in the wrongs it inflicts, ^{or} sanctions, or defends. Among these are all the Non-Resistants, and a large ^{number} of others who would have no scruples about voting under a Free Constitution. Foremost among these is Wendell Phillips, one of the noblest of men - ay, every inch a man - the very thought of him gives inspiration & courage in the midst of this crooked, time-serving, generation. Then, again, are all the women, among the Abolitionists, of every shade of opinion. None of them can vote, and they, therefore, don't count, when you add up the columns of ballots; than which, nothing can be a severer satire on those who trust to political action for doing away Slavery. The women, it is a fact, are the truest among the Anti-Slavery laborers; I should say, not less true than the truest of the men. Their help is inestimable - their coolness, courage, patience, faith, most admirable, and not to be resisted. So, my dear Sir, you see I can afford you not statistical return of numbers. Suffice it to say, that in every community, the real, consistent, practical Abolitionists - those who take the name from principle and not for selfish ends -

are a very small minority, frowned on by the sects and by the priests (for we have priests, in our American Protestantism, as cunning, as jealous, as selfish, as domineering, as any fraternity of Jesuits can show) - reviled by the political hacks, & traduced by the vulgar, who all join in loving partnership ~~to~~ against the Abolitionists. But, thank God, they are not cast down, and will not be put down. They have God and truth on their side; and, as I lately heard the Rev. E. J. Taylor say (the Methodist Seamen's preacher in Boston), "God is an immense majority in himself." We are numerous enough to be feared. The pro-slavery priests and politicians, are writhing and shrieking, at this very time, under their faithful rebukes. In a moral warfare, "one shall chase a thousand" you know, "and two put ~~the~~ thousand to flight." But I must not be so long in answering your questions, especially when I don't answer them. What are you to expect, when I have a definite reply to make. Why! very likely, then I shall say it, and not try to cover up my inability with a great talk about something else.

II. "What the station in life of those devoting their time & money to the cause?" And you instance Miss Kelley, & Mrs. Chapman.

Miss Kelley, one of the most eloquent & faithful of the Anti-Slavery band, was of humble origin. She was a native of Worcester Co. Massachusetts (the county in which Leicester is) - her father was in narrow circumstances. She had no very great advantages of education - our ^{district} Common School, and a few months in a higher school afterwards, afforded her all ~~the~~ her school education. When young, she gave no particular indication of unusual powers. She has nothing, in the way of property. She follows, very closely, the directions of Jesus to

his disciples, "Into whatsoever house or city ye enter," &c. &c. it
very humble support is all she receives for labors, whose
value accountants can't reckon, nor gold remunerate.

Mr. Chapman was the wife - is the widow - of a highly
respectable & intelligent merchant of Boston. She is a native of
this State, but passed some years of her youth (and if I am
not mistaken was partly educated) in England. The death
of her husband (2 or 3 years since) left her with a moderate
property only. She lives in Boston, in a handsome manner,
but without ostentation, and I suspect at quite a moderate
expense. She has several sisters - Anne Warren Weston -
Caroline Weston - Deborah Weston (and 2 others); all, ladies
of talent & spirit, and of the most energetic devotion to this
cause. The two former are good writers. Two or three ^{of them} live with
Mr. Chapman. The others, out of town.

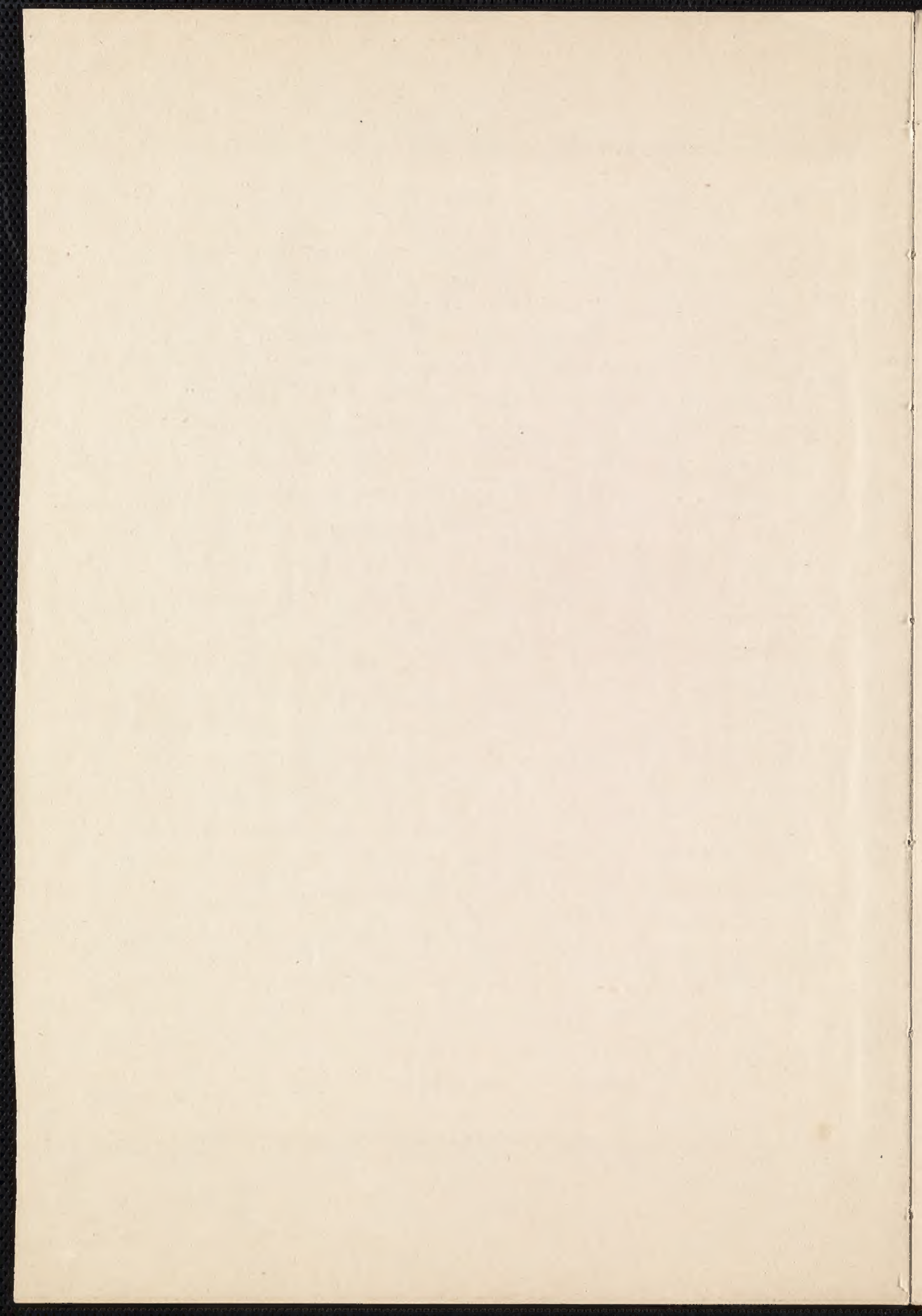
Mr. Follen - widow of Charles Follen, was of the Cabot
family, one of the oldest, most respectable, most honored
land (in some of the branches) most wealthy, of the City of Boston.
Mr. F. herself has little or no property, and is ^{mainly} dependent on
her exertions as a teacher. Her sister, Miss Susan Cabot, is
an efficient Abolitionist.

Wendell Phillips, and Edmund Quincy belong to two
~~of the~~ families as high & influential as ever Massachusetts
produced. The names of Quincy & Phillips are prominent and
honorable in our nation's history. They have nobly sacrificed
all the consideration growing out of family-connection & social
position, and identified themselves, & all their means, with
the wretched, degraded, dust-covered & hapless Slave. They
acknowledge him as a brother, and labour for him with
the zeal of brothers. Mr. Quincy has some property of his own,

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No. 2. but it is not large. He resides in Dedham, 8 or 10 miles S.W. of Boston. Mr. Phillips has considerable property, I believe, - by marriage chiefly. Himself & wife are liberal contributors, pecuniarily, to the cause. { In all respects I regard W.P. as second to none other in this enterprise. He has talent, coolness, courage, eloquence, faith, & a noble appearance.

Francis Jackson, a Boston ^{man} of less noted origin, but of a worthy & most estimable family, is a man who needs neither ancestors nor money to make him truly noble, respected, admired. He is in business in Boston, in connexion with Ellis Gray Loring (another Abolitionist, early, constant - a keen lawyer, who has brought much valuable legal knowledge to the cause) and, from a moderate income, gives not less than \$1000. annually to the Antislavery Cause, as well as a great deal of gratuitous service of the very best & most needful kind.

But the time would fail me to tell of the moral heroes & heroines of the cause. As yet I have spoken of a small part of those living in, or near, Boston. I have not spoken of Mr. Garrison, Mrs. L. M. Child, Mrs. Lucretia Mott (a Hicksite Quakeress of Phil^a), John S. Whittier (a Quaker, and a poet of no mean capacity, inspired by the Genius of Liberty, if there is such a Genius - rather I should say by the Spirit of God - for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, and a desire to honor & serve it, which cannot be repressed.)

In brief the Abolitionists are of every station in life. They have come from every social grade, and from all degrees of preparedness for the cause (if I may so speak), so far as this is affected by education, &c. They are wealthy and they are poor - they are known and unknown - they are highly gifted and only moderately so. But they come together

as equals, and count him or her the greatest who does, and dares, most faithfully for God & humanity. — This, you will say, is the partial eulogy of a friend & associate. Be it so. I believe it is the simple truth. Mr. Faneust would not admit it all. He would tell you they are crazy, misful, and (some of them) wicked. But, what he is, touching this cause, I will not now attempt to say, farther than that he exhorts every body to let it alone, and do nothing & say nothing for the Slave. "Silence" he says "is our duty." I heard him say so.

[I am sorry to say my letter will not be prepared for tomorrow's ship. It grows too rapidly under my hand; and I am now called away — and must obey the call.] I hope the 1st August Steamship will not be utterly too late.]

III. Your 3^d inquiry has relation to the conduct of the ^(as a body) Clergy and others towards the ^{free} colored population, &c. I reply that, in my view, that conduct is (as you suspect) incontestible evidence that they care very little about the question of Slavery, and by no means really ~~feel~~ regard it as a sin, & that of the most flagrant & comprehensive sort. I trust you will soon see a little book, published within 2 or 3 months, being the "Narrative of the Life of Frederic Douglass, an American Slave". You have heard of the man, probably. He should not have been omitted even in my scanty & imperfect list of Anti-Slavery names. He fled from Slavery in Maryland in 1838, and, coming to New York, was directed to New Bedford (in Massachusetts) as a place likely to afford him employment and as much security as any other. N. Bedford is an opulent & flourishing town of about 15,000 inhabitants; almost the sole business of its population is the Whale fishery with the various crafts & trades appertaining thereto.

This, however, is out of place. I spoke of the book, on account of the testimony ^{F. D.} ~~he~~ bears to the character & condition of the colored people in N. Bedford - they are numerous there. Now N. Bedford was for years the residence of Dr. Devey, and when he began to say anything on the subject of Slavery (which was not till long after his removal to New York) he alluded to the low & discouraging condition of the colored people in the place of his former residence, as well as in New York. The fact is, he knew nothing about them, as was ably & abundantly proved at the time by a young colored physician of N. Y., Dr. McCune Smith, in some newspaper articles, & which no man in the country need have been ashamed to have written. Furthermore, Rev. J. H. Morison (one of Dr. Devey's Successors in N. Bedford) assured me that Dr. Devey was quite mistaken in his representations of the col^d. people there, and told me that (when in New York a short time before) he had been to see Dr. D. and told him the same. I believe Dr. D. afterwards (in the Examiner) made some retraction or explanation, not very full or satisfactory, if my memory serves me. F. Douglass says, in his Narrative, (1st Edition, p. 114) "the most astonishing as well as the most interesting thing to me [i.e. in New Bedford] was the condition of the colored people, a great many of whom, like myself, had escaped thither as a refuge from the hunters of men. I found many, who had not been seven years out of their chains, living in finer houses, and evidently enjoying more of the comforts of life, than the average of slaveholders in Maryland. I will venture to assert that my friend Mr. Nathan Johnson (of whom I can say with a grateful heart, "I was hungry, and he gave me meat; I was thirsty, and he gave me drink; I was a stranger, and he took me in") lived in a neater house; dined at a better table; took, paid for, and read, more newspapers; better understood the moral, religious, and political character of the nation - than nine-tenths of the slaveholders in Talbot County, Maryland. Yet Mr. Johnson was a

working man. His hands were hardened by toil, and not his alone, but those also of Mrs. Johnson. I found the colored people much more spirited than I had supposed they would be." &c. &c.

This whole matter of Clerical & Church Indifference to Slavery is one of the most remarkable and extraordinary ^{facts} that the Anti-Slavery movement has brought to light. Few, who now see it as it is, would have believed it, ten years ago. It is awful, and is enough to make any conscientious man a Come-outer. I have not yet "come-out", in the outward man, from the Churches as existing; but I lose no opportunity of morally "coming out" from the priest-craft, and spiritual tyranny, of the ecclesiastical bodies, and from the Sin which they are winking at and holding up. This is too large a subject for me to enter upon here. I suppose you, in England, can have little conception of the effrontery, the brazen impudence, with which many of our Ecclesiastical bodies have supported, and still support, American Slaveholding from the Bible, from the Gospel, from natural right, &c. They are the mere tools and toad-eaters of the Politicians.

IV. "What line of Conduct does the principle of "No Union with Slaveholders" require?" Simply & briefly, as I understand it, to cease giving any direct (and, as far as may be, indirect) support to the existing civil institutions of the land - to cease from holding office, and from voting to put others in, in either of which cases there must be direct participation with the Slaveocracy (as the Slaveholding Power has been called) - to cease from ~~the~~ ^{the} support of any ecclesiastical institution conjointly with Slaveholders - and, in fine, in word & in deed, to bear a constant protest - as the Quakers would say, a testimony - against this National Constitution & Government. At least, such is the course of those who adopt & urge this ^{principle} ~~course~~. They aim, too, to expose the nature and the workings of our Government before all the people; and, as you may suppose, bring down upon themselves an untold amount of indignation and abuse - and expose themselves to great personal danger.

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V. "Is the statement too strong, that in the Southern States teaching the Slaves to read the Bible, is a capital offence, if persevered in after a first conviction?" I am not able to refer you to the documentary evidence that shall establish this position; and I do not remember to have heard of such a case. It is well known (see Stow's Sketch of the Laws relating to Slavery) that the Laws of the Slave States are very severe against teaching a Slave to read at all - making the penalty imprisonment, fines, lashing, &c. &c. You may have heard of the case at N. Orleans a few years since: An agent, employed by the N. Orleans City Bible Society to distribute bibles in that city, was seen to give ~~or offer~~ a bible to a Slave. He was immediately informed against, arrested, and brought before one of the City courts. The fact was proved, viz. that he did offer a bible to a Slave man, who looked at him very incredulously; (the bible, I think, was refused; I somewhere have the paper which contains an account of this transaction, but cannot now lay my hand upon it.) The ~~case~~ ~~was~~ ~~not~~ ~~by~~ accused denied, most solemnly, that he had any knowledge that the man was a slave. Nevertheless, the Court was about to inflict on him quite a severe punishment; but was induced to release him, on the assurance of the officers of the Bible Society that they had no intention to give bibles to Slaves - that their agents had positive orders not to do so, and pains would be taken to prevent the recurrence of any similar offence. All assemblages of Slaves, even for religious purposes, are regarded as unlawful assemblages, & may be broken up, and punishment inflicted. Such meetings may be had, in presence of two or more responsible Slaveholders, in some places.

VI. "Supposing the Clergy and gentry [we know no such class - there are, of course, all the various grades of intelligence and refinement, but no admitted gentry, or class having peculiar privileges, and distinctions] of the North were willing to become real Abolitionists, what course would it be wise & judicious for them to pursue?" A question which I fear I shall not satisfactorily answer - for circumstances do often cases, sometimes, and do require a somewhat different line of conduct. But, in general - and as to the Clergy. They are now

terribly afraid of this subject - of preaching upon it, of speaking in its
behalf, of ~~not~~ identifying themselves with any of those who are pledged
to the cause. ~~And~~ Still more - the Clergy (as a body) are the most
subtle and powerful opponents that the Abolitionists have to
encounter. They are exceedingly mad against them, because they have
not subjected themselves to Clerical lead, and waited till their masters
gave them lead to go forward. The Clergy must lay aside all this -
must treat Slavery as a sin - and show the people how they are
upholding and strengthening the system of Slavery.. and set them ^{the}
example of an Anti-Slavery life, before they ^{can} ~~could~~ be of any ^{real} help
in the overthrow of Slavery. This, I say, in general. I do not
consider myself very competent to point out specific measures;
which must, to a great extent, be left to different individuals and
denominations. Some, looking to political action, can see
no way of attacking Slavery save by the organization of a distinct
political party. This experiment has been tried, and I think it
may be said to have failed. After years of effort, it numbers in
the whole country only some 63,000 voters out of 2,000,000. Still,
I believe that a good deal may be done through political instru-
mentalities. But these are only to be set in motion, by the omni-
potent force of Moral power - of Truth, applied to the Understanding,
+ and the Conscience. - I can point to ~~some~~ ^{effectual} specific work to
be done; e.g. some declare the only ^{effectual} way is to seek the dissolution
of our present Union. The old, original Abolitionists, who have
gone through the hottest of the fight, & braved the greatest dangers,
most take this stand. In this, they are ably supported by Judge
William Jay of New York (& son of John Jay of our Revolutionary
times, a man of incorruptible integrity - ^{first} Chief Justice of the United States)
a man of eminence, and strong devotion to the Anti-Slavery Cause; he has
never been identified with the Old School Abolitionists, but has

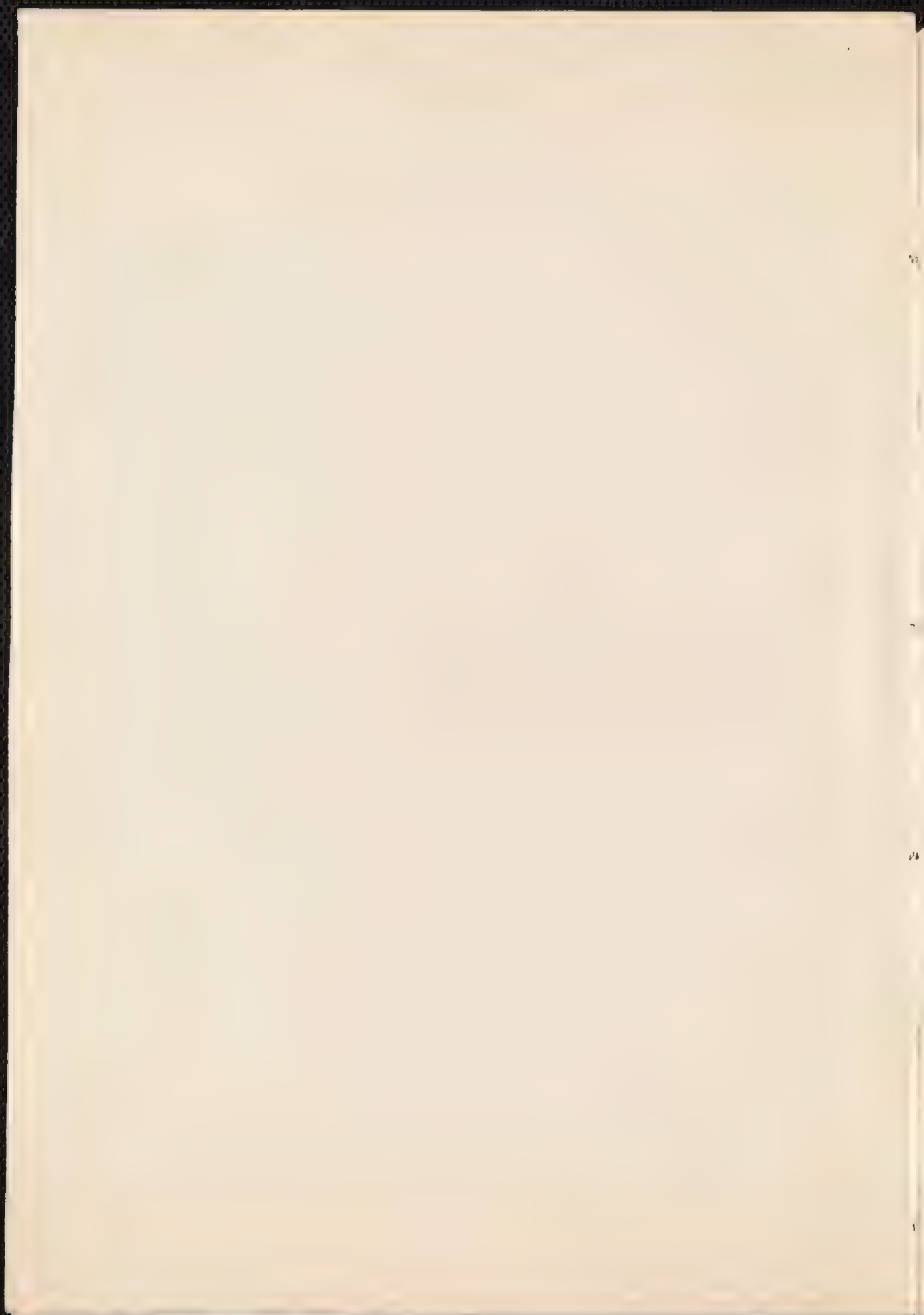
~~rather~~ favored the Liberty party. His present position is a severe blow to that party. - Others ~~will~~ say, Remain under the Constitution, and use the power it confers to abolish Slavery in the District of Columbia, in the Territories, to prevent the addition of any new Slave State, to stop the inter-state Slave Trade. Some very good & wise men talk so - even in the face & eyes of the fact that Slave States are constantly coming in (Florida, only this last winter) and that now, at one swoop, 8 or 10 States are to be brought in, under the name of Texas, in absolute defiance of the Constitution. I believe ^{that} Liberty has nothing to hope from our present Constitution, nor from our country, as at present constituted. The Constitution is but a nose of wax in the hands of the Slaveholders, who, practically, rule the land and dictate its policy.

VII. Needs but little to be said in reply, after what I have said. I should certainly reply in the affirmative - that the "denouncers of Slavery in the abstract" might do something towards the abolition of ~~the~~ Slavery & the Slave Trade in the District of Columbia; &c, &c"; and yet not much. John Quincy Adams, whose opinion is law, and more than gospel, with most of our ministers & whig partisans, has declared he would not vote to abolish Slavery in the Dist. of Columbia - on the ground (if I understand him) that the consent of the masters ought first to be obtained; else the act would be arbitrary & despotic! Alas! How keen-sighted to despotism are they!

VIII. You are entirely and thoroughly in the right when you ask, "Are not the present efforts of Abolitionists more to awaken the National conscience to the sin of Slavery, and the necessity of some change, than for the purpose of pointing out definite measures?" You then answer, "Immediate, unconditional, unrequited emancipation, none I presume contend for." and herein you are quite in an error, touching the principle of the Antislavery movement. "Immediate, unconditional, unrequited emancipation, is just what the Abolitionists demand. To say that they expect emancipation, when it does

take place, will be of this character generally, would be to say more than I suppose to be true. Certainly, ~~some~~ such an expectation would be in direct opposition to all our experience of mankind. No! we shall probably see the same selfishness, & indifference, & avarice displayed among the mass when Emancipation comes to be discussed, or to take place, ~~as~~ that we have seen in Slavery; and our national treasury may be exhausted, and a heavy debt incurred, to compensate the slaveholder! But with all this, the Abolitionists have enough to do. It is their duty to hold up boldly and perseveringly the Standard of truth - to demand for the Slave his natural, God-given, and inalienable rights, - rights which centuries of Slavery cannot annul or weaken. It is the duty of this people to set every Slave in their boundaries free - instantly, unconditionally free. They have grievously sinned against their brother; immediate repentance is the only reparation they can make ^{him}. The Slave has an unquestionable right to his freedom; as a man, he is entitled to be free. The Abolitionists, on his behalf, assert this right, and make this demand. Men are beginning, slowly, through the obscurity of prejudice, & self-interest, and contempt for the colored man they are beginning to see this truth - which if any might, might be called self-evident. When they do see it, or a majority of them, the work of ~~abolition~~ Emancipation will be taken hold of, and done, with the usual admixture of self & policy. Some few will feel their conscience touched, their hearts pricked, and will do justice to their slaves, though they impoverish themselves. The mass will demand compensation, on a pecuniary ^{advantage} ~~basis~~ in some other way. - And should the Abolitionists raise the question of compensation, it would be morally impossible for them to admit that a single sterling should be paid to the Slaveholder. It would be a recognition of his right to hold his brother-man as his property - an endorsement of his claims upon him as a chattel-personal. No!

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10.4. Let not the Slaveholder, who has for generations lived in idleness and plenty on the stolen labours of the Slave, ask for more! He has already ~~been~~ snatched from the Slave all his earnings, and himself too, all his life. If any one is to be compensated, surely there can be no question as to the party to whom, in honour and in right, the compensation belongs.

IX "What are the principal objects for which the Abolitionists need pecuniary funds?" Chiefly to sustain their presses, and lecturers. The Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, for instance, is one of the two chief auxiliaries of the "American Anti-Slavery Society" (the Pennsylvania Society being the other) and it pays a considerable sum annually to sustain the operations of the American Society. The disbursements of that Society are, 1st To sustain the "Standard", its organ, a large weekly newspaper, the subscription to which for the year, is only \$2. (or about 8 sh. 6^d. sterling), not sufficient to defray the cost and give an editor a support. It is thought best however not to make the subscription higher, but that the balance should be defrayed by private contributions. The expenses of that Society have been very greatly reduced within 2 years, and are now (as I am able to assure you and all friends) conducted with the strictest economy. The "Massachusetts Society" has its own office to support, and makes annually some donation to the support of the "Liberator", though that is not its organ, nor the organ of any Society; it also keeps lecturers in the field, more or fewer as its existing means will admit. It distributes, gratuitously, large numbers of papers and pamphlets. Neither of these Societies spend a dollar in efforts to controul political elections. Their entire aim is to enlighten the public mind, to spread before it the facts which show our connexion with Slavery, the support we give it, and the tyrannous power it wields over the entire Nation, the North included, and to awaken the conscience & rouse the

stumbling, ~~the~~ torpid spirit of freedom, to ~~these~~ feel and act in this cause. And the Abolitionists (nay and many Slaveholders too) feel that the time is short; that, if the subject is not quickly taken in hand, a sore remedy applied, the remedy of justice, - ~~that~~ the Slaves will themselves take the work into their own hands, and apply such corrective as a fierce sense of their long and intolerable wrongs shall dictate. As James Russell Lowell, a young poet of ours, who seems inspired by Truth & Freedom, has lately sung:

"Out from the land of bondage 'tis decreed our slaves shall go,
And signs to us are offered, as erst to Pharaoh;
If we are blind, their exodus, like Israel's of yore,
Through a Red sea is doomed to be, whose surges are of gore."

But he adds:

"'Tis ours to save our brethren, with peace & love to win
Their darkened hearts from error, ere they harden ^{them} ~~it~~ to sin;
But, if man before his duty with a listless spirit strays,
Ere long the Great Avenger takes the work from out his hands."

J. R. Lowell, I may say, is one of the younger Children of the Rev. Dr. Lowell, whose name, I am sure, is known to you as one of the oldest and most respected of the ministers of Boston - Unitarian in fact, and in all his associations & connexions, but never willing to take that name, or any sectarian name - (I speak of the father - what the son's theological views are I do not know.) It is enough for me to know that he understands the Christian law and its demands, much better than the greater part of our reverend & ordained divines.)

~~It is a fact~~ The Lines, from which the above stanzas are taken, were written "on reading of the capture of certain fugitive Slaves near Washington". The facts are briefly these: About 80 slaves from St. Charles Co, Maryland, concerted a plan for escape - it was but a few weeks since. They passed through Washington in their way north in the evening, creating the greatest alarm & consternation, it being imagined that there was to be a general rising among the Slaves. Many families sought

the Arsenal & the Navy Yard for protection, and passed the night there. What a comment on the assertion that the Slaves are contented, and do not want their liberty! At Marlinton, it is said, they divided into 3 parties, taking different routes. One party (at least) was pursued - overtaken at Rockville - (Montgomery County) - the citizens of R. also turned out to ^{attack} ~~rescue~~ them. ~~They~~ The slaves being only armed with clubs, & the like, could make but little resistance to muskets, rifles, pistols, &c. and were soon overpowered, after having been murderously shot at, wounded, & some killed. They were lodged in Rockville jail, and will now all be sold to go to Texas, no doubt. So much for loving freedom & trying to be free, in this land. Did I say too much when I said there was no hope for liberty under our present Government & Constitution? I do verily believe, were the Union dissolved, the South would be compelled to abolish Slavery in self-defence, and would do it in 5 years. Whether the rest of the Slaves got clear, or have been captured, we do not yet know. ^{My} Yesterday's paper informed me of a "large meeting of citizens of Charles Co. Maryland, at Port Tobacco to consider what measures were most likely to, put a stop to the elopement of their slaves." They determined on a stricter police (irons, whips, ~~and~~ ^{torture, &c.}) all free negroes were notified that "their presence would not be tolerated in the county after the 1st of Decr. next - the meeting pledging itself to purchase all their property at fair prices" [on the honor & word of slaveholders!] "Ministers of the Gospel are hereafter positively prohibited from holding night meetings for the attendance of Slaves, who are not to be allowed to leave their quarters after dark, without a pass from their masters." "The employment of free negroes at the fishing-landings will not be allowed." - This is quite a digression; but you have already so much to forgive in this letter, of tediousness and rambling, that a little more or less is now hardly worth remarking upon. Still the affair is really ~~quite~~ an important one in the history of Slavery. Several of the political journals have remarked on the significant fact that this ~~escape~~ was attempted, just after the news was received that Texas was ready to accept the conditions of Annexation offered by our (corrupt) Congress; intimating that this could not be kept from the knowledge of the Slaves, who well know (especially those in Virginia, Maryland & N. Carolina) that ~~the~~ Texas is to open a new & vast Slave

market, which must be stocked from their number! Such is America:

X. "What change of conduct toward the free colored people, on the part of the inhabitants of the North, is necessary to place them on a level with the white population?" To place them on a level of opportunity, and to give them a "fair chance", I suppose you mean. To effect this, to give them fair play, all that is required is, to give to them the ordinary occupations & business of men, as these are open to white persons. At present, even in Boston, ~~where~~ there are but few occupations, which are open to colored people. They are servants, waiters, cleaners of clothes, boots, &c.; they keep shops for the sale of old clothing & the like; but rarely, if at all, can they find any employ as mechanics, or tradesmen. At the South, the slaves are their best blacksmiths, carpenters, &c. &c. At the North, there is no such thing. White workmen will not work in company with black; and no master-mechanic, if ever so well disposed, dares to employ a ~~black~~ ^{colored} journeyman. Frederick Douglass was a good ship-calker when he came North; this probably was one reason of his going to N. Bedford, where ship-building and repairing are continually going on. But, he says, "such was the strength of prejudice against color, among the white calkers, that they refused to work with me, and of course I could get no employment". So he took to sawing wood (for fuel), shoveling coal, carrying the hod, sweeping chimneys, and rolling oil-casks, "all of which (he says) I did for nearly 3 years in N. Bedford before I became known to the anti-slavery world." - Now he is one of the most tried, efficient, & agreeable agents that ~~are~~ are in the anti-slavery field. All that the colored people ask for themselves, or abolitionists for them, is that they might have an equal chance in the world with others; and they are as willing as white persons to abide the consequences. As it is, they are a very decent & worthy, & in numerous instances a highly respectable, class of people; and this has been effected against fearful odds.

Thus I have replied, in some sort, to your inquiries. You say, "I know I have given you questions for a volume, but I know also you can condense a reply." You will feel that you have got the volume; and will, perforce, retract your opinion as to my condensing powers.

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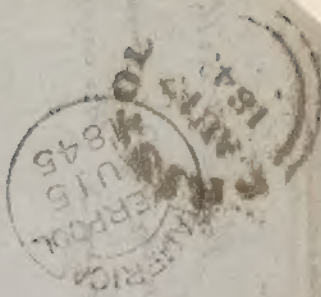
5 Jesus is doubtless to come in - and there are already proofs enough that men of all parties will bow the knee and acquiesce. No: our "clerical declaimers against slavery in the abstract, and the grandiloquent against annexation" (of whom you speak) will not now feel called on to sympathize more with the Abolitionists. Their heart is not in the work. It is their part to wait on the popular breath. They have no notion of taking up such a cross - not they. They will go as the politicians go, and after a few groans, will also say, Amen. At R.C. Winthrop, the Whig Representative of Boston in Congress, lately gave as a toast at a public dinner - "Our Country, however bounded, whether by the Sabine or the Del Norte - still our country - to be loved and defended by all our hearts & arms," and so on, in that strain - I have not his exact words, but I have given his execrable sentiment; I wish I could feel that Boston would disown it & him; but it will not. He knew well enough what he was saying, & to whom he was saying it.

We are now in the midst of preparations (we, I mean in Leicester) for a celebration of the First of August, the Anniversary of Br. W. J. Emancipation. It will be considerably noticed in New England, as the anniversary of freedom to 800,000 slaves, and as an appropriate occasion for carrying on the warfare against our own Slavery. We meet with the greatest opposition from the "Orthodox" party, ministers, men and women. Unitarians, Methodists, Quakers are engaged to carry it forward. The cry of "infidel" is noisily brayed about.

I wish you would make my respects to Miss Estlin, to Miss Carpenter, to Mr. Armstrong, & family, and to Mr. James. I read the "Inquirer" with much satisfaction. I highly respect & honour its position on the Maynooth question, though I perceive not generally approved by the Unitarians.

I must ask you to pardon me this ^{I fear} rather incoherent letter, and its great length. I have been much occupied, and have had to write it, now a little & then a little, as opportunity was obtained. I trust you may find it of some service; and it will not be wholly in vain, if it do no more than assure you of the respect & esteem, with which I am, and would continue, your friend & fellow-servant.

I close, July 30th. Samuel May.



Per Steamship }
August 1st.

J. B. Esq. F.L.S.

4, Park Street.

Bristol.

[England.]

Britannia



